NSC BRIEFING 8 July 1959

CARIBBEAN SITUATION

I. Cuba and Venezuela continuing attempts to oust Trujillo.

A. More reports received of preparations in Cuba for efforts against Dominican Republic, either directly or through Haiti.

1. According to one report, Castro now thinks Trujillo too strong for frontal assault, so he now preparing to open new front by invasion of Haiti by Haitian exiles and Cubans to overthrow Duvalier regime and set up revolutionary government.

2. Haitian government expects attack and army chief of staff privately admits country virtually defenseless. Attack would probably lead to Dominican military intervention in support of Haitian regime.

3. Report from Venezuela that Dominican exiles there recruiting for new invasion of Dominican Republic.

4. Dominican, Nicaraguan, and Haitian exiles in Cuba are Communist-led or -infiltrated.

5. Venezuela is aware of this danger, but considers priority now goes to ousting dictators.

II. Organization of American States (OAS) faces serious test.

A. Principle issue is to halt Cuban-Venezuelan efforts to oust dictatorships in Caribbean area, thus supporting principle of non-intervention.

B. Very strong sentiment in Latin America that dictatorships, as symbolized by Trujillo's, must be eliminated from hemisphere.

C. Majority of the governments, possibly even Cuban and Venezuelan, might support meeting of foreign ministers convened, not under Rio Treaty to consider specific charges against Cuba and Venezuela, but under OAS charter to discuss both problem of foreign-backed subversion and ways of promoting democracy.

III. In Cuba Fidel Castro facing intensifying domestic unrest.

A. Charges of Communist infiltration in armed forces recently aired by resigning air force chief, Major Diaz Lanz, points up issue of growing concern to many informed Cubans.

1. Anti-Communist officers being purged from air force and probably from other services.

B. Castro's determination to push agrarian reform law has alienated many middle- and small-landowners. Castro has claimed he would relinquish office of prime ministry and personally assume direction of Agrarian Reform Institute.

C. Anti-government terroristic acts in capital and reported presence of opposition guerrilla bands in two provinces has led to many arrests of alleged "counterrevolutionaries."

IV. Major Diaz Lanz as head of the Rebel Air Force was right-hand man of Castro during revolution.

A. Lanz defected 29 June and arrived in Florida 1 July.

B. Admitted AS RESIDENT ALIEN by Immigration and Naturalization Service who turned him over to Eastland Committee. ~~Has permanent residence?~~

ANNEX

Major Pedro Luis DIAZ Lanz

I. The 32-year old Diaz Lanz, who defected as chief of Cuban air force on 29 June with bitter public blast against Communist penetration Cuban armed forces, arrived in Florida 1 July.

A. Had been declared deserter and traitor by Castro and his arrest ordered.

B. Was pilot for small Cuban airline, 1947-53.

C. From 1956-1958, was co-pilot employed by US-owned Moa Bay Mining Company.

D. From mid-1958 to end of Castro's revolution, he ferried supplies to rebels from "abroad." No previous military experience.

E. Castro named him head of air force in January.

1. Apparently Lanz was not a good administrator and this, as well as his employment of his brothers and ex-Batista pilots, have given Castro some basis for attacks on him.